



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

September 7, 2006

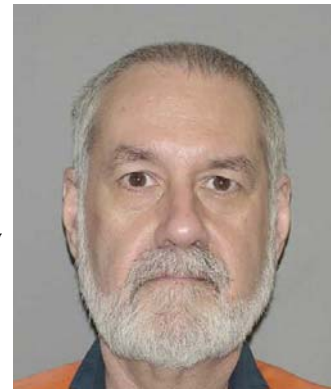
News Release

Michigan child sex offender receives 10 years for his third strike

DETROIT — A Clinton Township man was sentenced here today to 10 years in jail following his third conviction for sexual crimes involving children. Today's sentence was announced by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the investigating agency.

Ernest Gagne, 57, of the 41000 block of Justin Dr., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Victoria Roberts to 120 months in prison, to be followed by three years' probation.

The investigation by ICE agents revealed that Gagne had two prior convictions for sexual crimes involving children. In the late 1990s Gagne was incarcerated for sexually assaulting a minor in New Jersey; in 2001, Gagne received an additional one-year sentence after an arrest and conviction by the Utica Police Department for possessing child pornography.



In November 2003, ICE special agents assisted the Macomb County Sheriff's Office and Clinton Township Police Department with executing a search warrant at Gagne's residence. Items seized at his home included: two laptop computers, floppy disks, CD read-write disks and videotapes. A computer forensic analysis revealed more than 33,000 images of child pornography consisting mostly of young teenage males posing nude or engaging in sexually explicit acts; 108 of the images were of children in bondage.

In January 2004, Gagne was sentenced by the State of Michigan to five additional years in prison for his probation violations. Probation conditions placed on Gagne prohibited him from accessing computers and the Internet. Execution of search warrants in November 2003 concluded that Gagne had been accessing child pornography, which violated his probation.

“Using ICE’s expertise and authority to keep sexual predators away from Michigan’s children is a special role that ICE will not turn away from” said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Detroit. “The joint efforts of ICE and our county and local law enforcement partners in this investigation have made our community a safer place for our kids.”

Gagne made his initial appearance in the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan in January 2005. In April 2006, Gagne pleaded guilty to possessing child pornography.

This case is part of Operation Predator, ICE’s comprehensive initiative to safeguard children from foreign national pedophiles, international sex tourists, Internet child pornographers, and human traffickers. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 8,400 individuals nationwide, including 202 in Michigan.

ICE encourages the public to report suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. Investigators staff this hotline around the clock. Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Frances Carlson, Eastern District of Michigan, prosecuted this case.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.